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INTERIM REPORT

ON THE STATE OF THE

PUBLIC HEALTH OF PETWORTH
1942.

BY

Medical Officer of Health,
KENNETH N. MAWSON,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

WEST SUSSEX NORTH-EASTERN COMBINED DISTRICT.

Public Health Department,

November, 1943.

Comewell House,

Horsham.

To the Chairman and Members of the Petworth Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit a short Interim Report on the health of the District during 1942. In accordance with the instructions contained in the Ministry of Health Circular 2773, it has been necessary to exclude from the report considerable detailed information, but I would be pleased to supply any further particulars to any member of the Council who may require them.

The policy of duplicating copies of the report has again been adopted in the interest of economy, and the three Districts forming the North-Eastern Combined Sanitary Districts have been dealt with separately.

Reference to the figures given will show that healthy conditions have prevailed throughout the year. The routine work of the Department has continued, in spite of the many extra duties placed upon your staff as a result of war conditions. Although no matters of outstanding importance call for special comment, attention is drawn to the following points:-

(1). Births & Deaths.

There were 150 births during the year, as compared with 135 during 1941. Deaths registered were 151, as against 113 in the previous year.

These figures show a rise in the birth-rate from 15.4 to 16.79, and a considerable rise in the death-rate from 11.6 to 16.9. The latter increase is mainly due to certain deaths which resulted from enemy action. A contributory factor causing an increase in the death-rate is a reduction in the Registrar-General's Estimate of Resident Population.

(2). Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

Only one case of Diphtheria occurred during the year, as compared with 10 in 1941. The child had not been immunized.

There was a drop in the incidence of Scarlet Fever, 16 cases being notified, as compared with 25 in 1941. Fourteen cases were admitted to Chichester Isolation Hospital.

There was an outbreak of Measles, of a mild type, 107 notifications being received. It must, however, be remembered that many cases of this disease do not receive medical attention, and are thus excluded from the official figures.

(3). Diphtheria Immunization.

Reference to the figures in the body of the report will show that the campaign has proceeded satisfactorily during the year. The percentage figures of children who had received complete courses of treatment by the 31st December, 1942, namely 46% for pre-school children and 88% for school children, are regarded as satisfactory. Efforts are continuing to maintain and increase these numbers, special attention being given to the younger age-groups.

(4). Scabies, Tuberculosis and Venereal Diseases.

Notes dealing with these matters will be found in the body of the report.

I would again like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for their consideration, and to acknowledge the loyal assistance of all members of the Health Department, and the co-operation of the Chief Officers of the Council.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

PETWORTH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1942.

SECTION A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres) 45,635

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1941) according to Rate Books 2,514

Rateable Value £45,983

Sum represented by a Penny Rate £190

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

		Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate	138	85	53	Birth Rate 16.79
	Illegitimate	12	8	4	
Still Births		8	4	4	Rate per 1,000 Total Births 53.3
Deaths		151	88	63	Death Rate 16.9

England and Wales Birth Rate..... 15.8 Death Rate 11.6

West Sussex Rural Districts Birth Rate... 16.78 Death Rate 12.76

Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis and other Puerperal Causes 0

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births 53.3
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births 50.79
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births ... 83.3

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) 14
Deaths from Measles (all ages) 0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) 0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) 0

The cheif causes of death were:-

Hearth Disease 36
Cancer 14
Cerebral Haemorrhage 12
Violent Causes 36

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following cases were notified during the year:-

Scarlet Fever..... 16
Diphtheria..... 1
Measles.....107
Whooping Cough..... 10
Pneumonia..... 10
Dysentery..... 1
Puerperal Pyrexia 2

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of cases added to the Register during the Year 10

Pulmonary Males	4	Non-Pulmonary Males	0
Females	5	Females	1
	9		1

There were four deaths from Tuberculosis; 2 pulmonary (1 male, 1 female); 2 non-pulmonary (Male).

The number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register at the 31st December, 1942 was 95.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Sessions have been held throughout the year at the Petworth clinic and in the villages. The latter sessions are held at the schools, usually on the occasion of Medical Inspections.

The percentage of school children immunised at the end of 1942 was estimated to be 88%, as compared with 72% at the beginning of the year. A very considerable improvement was effected in the case of pre-school children, the figure being raised from 26% to 46%. I would again point out that this age group includes all children from birth to the age of 5, - and it should be remembered that inoculation is not carried out until the end of the first year. It will thus be seen that the figure of 46% is very satisfactory. It is among younger children that Diphtheria is most dangerous.

TREATMENT OF SCABIES AND VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

A brief reference was made in the last annual report to the spread of these conditions, and to the powers given to Local Authorities by the Scabies Order of 1941.

Under this Order, Sanitary Authorities were required to make provision for the treatment of cases brought to the notice of the Health Department, and for the following-up of contacts. Owing to the comparatively small number of cases in an area such as this (as compared with industrial towns), it was felt that it would be uneconomic to set up a special Cleansing Centre. Application was made to the Ministry of Health for local women and children to be dealt with at Tan Cottage, Horsham, the Evacuation Sick Bay, the staff of which had had considerable experience in dealing with such cases. Approval to this suggestion was received, and it was agreed that, in any exceptional severe cases, children might be admitted as In-Patients to the sick-bay, payment being made to the Evacuation Account from the local Rate Fund, at the rate of £1. per week. The great majority of cases, however have been treated as Out-Patients, the necessary material being provided by the Council.

The difficulty regarding the treatment of adult males was solved by making application to the authorities concerned for permission to refer such patients to the local Military hospital. In this matter the Commanding Officer and his staff have been most co-operative, and a number of men and older boys have been dealt with at the hospital, - these being cases where home-treatment was not considered advisable.

The total number of cases treated during the year was 83 and were dealt with as shown:-

(a). Tan Cottage: (28 In-Patients treated .
(14 Out-Patients treated.

(b). At Base Hospital (males)..3.

(c). Treated at home (patients and contacts)...14.

(d). Evacuees treated at Ganavan Sick-Bay, Cocking....24.

SECTION. B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority.

(a) Medical.

Kenneth N. Lawson, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health, part-time with Horsham Rural and Horsham Urban Sanitary Districts, together forming the North-East Combine Sanitary District.

(b) Sanitary Inspectors.

Norman Green, M.R.San.I., A.I.S.E., M.S.I.A.
Senior Sanitary Inspector. (1. Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors Examination joint Board for Sanitary Inspectors.
2. Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute for Inspectors of Meat and Other Foods.
3. Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute for Advanced Knowledge of the Duties of a Sanitary Inspector.
4. Certificate of the Institute of Hygiene (Honours). (Also Water Engineer and Superintendent of Sewage Works).

W. Parker, C.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector. (1. Certificate of The Royal Sanitary Institute for Sanitary Inspectors.
2. Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute for Inspectors of Meat and Other Foods).

(c) Surveyor under Building Byelaws:-

F.J. Hodgson, L.R.I.B.A., A.I.Struct.E., (Part-time).

2.(a) LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Routine Bacteriological work throughout the year was again referred to the Emergency Public Health Laboratory at Christs Hospital.

The total number of specimens was 150, made up as follows.

	Nose and Throat Swabs.	Faeces.	Blood.	Sputum.
Jan. - March.	5	-	-	-
April - June.	6	6	1	-
July - Sept.	12	-	-	-
Oct. - Dec.	8	2	-	-

	Waters.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
Jan. - March.	21	-	26
April - June.	24	2	39
July - Sept.	28	2	42
Oct. - Dec.	33	-	43

(b) ACCOMMODATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

There has been no change in the arrangements whereby patients are admitted to the Chichester Isolation Hospital. By agreement with the Chichester City Council, two beds are reserved for cases from the Petworth Rural District.

The following cases of infectious disease were admitted during the period ending 31st December, 1942:-

Scarlet Fever	14.
Diphtheria	1 (1 D.N.C.).
Measles	1
	17

(c) HOSPITALS PROVIDED OR SUBSIDISED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

(1) Tuberculosis.

There is no change from the previous year with regard to the treatment of Tuberculosis. Cases are admitted either to Aldingbourne House (accommodation 70 persons) or to a ward at Worthing Isolation Hospital, Swandean (accommodation 12 beds), whilst surgical cases are admitted to St. Richards Hospital, Chichester, to the Royal Sea-Bathing Hospital, now at Bracknell in Berks, or to the Lord Mayor Treloar's Hospital, Alton, Hants (for children).

(2) Maternity.

The County Council arranged for resident and evacuated expectant mothers to be admitted to:-

(a) Brighton Hospital for Women.
(b) Southlands Hospital, Shoreham.
(c) Worthing Hospital Maternity Home.
(d) Improvised Maternity Homes at Haslemere, Hindhead and Woking.

(3) Smallpox.

The County Council's reservation of two beds in the Brighton Small-Pox Hospital at Fulking remains unchanged.

(4) General.

St. Richard's Hospital, Chichester, administered by the Public Health Committee of the County Council, takes cases from the area not considered suitable for admission to the General Hospital.

(d) HOSPITALS NOT SUBSIDISED BUT AVAILABLE FOR PATIENTS RESIDENT IN THE DISTRICT.

The Petworth Cottage Hospital has accommodation for thirteen patients, arranged in two wards of six beds each, with one private ward. The hospital is provided with an operating theatre and X'ray Department.

(e) AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(a) Patients suffering from notifiable infectious disease, when sent to Chichester Isolation Hospital, are transported in one of the Chichester Borough Ambulances, driver and nurse being provided by the hospital.

(b) The Council maintain a modern Ambulance, a Morris vehicle delivered in 1940. This is used for the collection and transfer of cases of non-infectious illness and accident, the duties of driver and attendant being undertaken by unpaid volunteers.

(f) CLINIC AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

The County Council maintain a small Clinic in High Street, Petworth. A combined Child Welfare and Ante-Natal session is held there fortnightly; Dental and Diphtheria Immunisation clinics are held as required. In the more remote parts of the rural area, minor ailments among school children are attended by the District Nurses, who also act as School Nurses. Children required to attend special clinics for eye or orthopaedic defects are referred to Chichester or Horsham.

Patients suffering from, or suspected to be suffering from, any form of Tuberculosis, are referred to the Dispensary at either Chichester or Horsham, weekly sessions being held at each centre.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. WATER

There has been little of particular interest to record regarding water supply. Connection of houses and farms to the public mains has proceeded steadily throughout the year, 69 being made to supply 89 separate properties.

Two small extensions have been made during the year on the grounds of their importance to public health, namely 70 yards at Westburton and 260 yards at Brookbridge, Wisborough Green.

Sampling for bacteriological tests has continued throughout the year, and after a long run of consecutive samples were found to contain B. Coli of the non-faecal type in varying amounts, an investigation was carried out by Dr. E.V. Suckling in co-operation with the Council's Medical Officer of Health and Consulting Engineers. The report showed that, whilst the contamination was not of a serious nature, further safeguards were desirable, and these were immediately put into effect. Since then there has been improvement in the results of the samples. A chemical analysis was made by Dr. E.V. Suckling, in the course of his investigations, and was found very satisfactory.

In October work was commenced with a view to clearing and enlarging the adit connecting the borehole tubes and the well, so that a higher rate of pumping could be maintained with either set of pumps. Owing to unforseen difficulties this work was prolonged and owing to more urgent work elsewhere was temporarily suspended, and was in that state at the end of the year.

The Council have many more extensions to water mains in mind which they would like to carry out, but owing to restrictions on obtaining loans, material and labour, they have not been able to proceed.

2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The erection of a complete new sewage disposal works, adjoining the existing disposal works at the Petworth Northern Outfall, was commenced during the year, and was still in progress at the end of 1942.

The new works will deal with sewage from the Council's property at Hampers Green and other public property, and will be large enough to deal with such building developments as can at present be forseen after the War.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Housing inspections having been discontinued except in certain circumstances, the amount of re-drainage and improvements have been small. Where pollution was serious or conditions gave rise to complaint, action was taken to have improvements carried out.

CLOSET ACCOMODATION.

The number of closets converted to water carriage system during the past five years is.-

1938.....	5
1939	1
1940	9
1941	3
1942	1

3. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

A refuse collection service covers the whole of the district, with the exception of one or two very isolated farms. The frequency of collection varies according to the nature of the area, being twice weekly in the more densely populated parts of Petworth, once weekly on the outskirts of the town fortnightly in all the villages, and monthly in the more sparsely populated parts of the district.

Two refuse dumps are still recognised in the district for the convenience of people living in inaccessible parts, and these are cleared as necessary.

As practically all refuse is salvaged, incineration has ceased. Refuse which remains after salvage operations is tipped crude into an old stone pit.

The Council undertook the collection of waste paper and now collect from individual households all salvable material.

The Council have not undertaken the emptying of the cesspools. Many enquiries are received from residents as to the facilities available for this work, and they are referred to private firms, adjoining local authorities or builders, as seems appropriate to each case. The Council's attention has been drawn to the need for the provision of a cesspool emptying service due principally to the effects of the comprehensive district water scheme, but no action was taken owing to the impossibility at the present time of obtaining a vehicle.

4. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Number of notices served under the Public Health Acts.-

1.	Informal	21
2.	Statutory	0

Result of Notices served.-

1.	Informal	15
2.	Statutory	0

Inspections etc.-

Miscellaneous inspections	86
Re-inspections	21

Factories.-

Number on Register:-	
(a) where mechanical Power is used	26
(b) " " " is not used	31
Number of defects found	0

Bakehouses:-

Number on Register	16
Underground	0
Inspections	27
Number of defects found	1
Number of defects remedied	0

Other Factories:-

Inspections	9

Butchers Shops:-

Inspections	185

Slaughterhouses.-

Registered	6
Licenced	0
Inspections	62

Moveable Dwellings:-

Number licenced	9
Number refused licences	0
Inspections	13

Fried Fish Shops .	Inspections	30
Public Conveniences.	"	71
Refuse Collection.	"	55
Refuse Disposal.	"	46
Sewerage	"	243
Water Supply.	"	820
Drainage.	"	53

Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	86
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	2
Salvage Visits	84
Civil Defence Visits	45
War Damage Visits	109
Privies converted to Pail Closets	0
Pail closets converted to Water Closets	1

Houses connected to main Drainage:-

(a) Newly Built 0
(b) Existing 0

Water:-

Approvals granted in respect of new houses 0
New houses connected to main supply 0
Existing houses connected to main supply 84
Samples taken from private supplies for bacteriological examination or chemical analysis 26
Number of samples found "not satisfactory" 22

Visits of enquiry into Infectious Diseases 70

Number of rooms disinfected (Formaldehyde fumigation)..... 28

Miscellaneous visits in connection with Infectious Diseases..... 29

Number of Shops inspected (Shops Act 1934) 8

Camping Sites:-

Number licenced 1

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

There is no industry in this district which uses steam power or other industrial process likely to cause a nuisance from smoke etc.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There is no public swimming bath in the area.

The River Rother, at a point where a weir dams the water for Coultershaw Mill, has been used for bathing by both Civilians and Military personnel. Bacteriological analysis of the water shows that it is unsafe for bathing purposes, but a warning notice to be erected by the Council may stop this practice.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No examination of furniture etc., is undertaken before or after tenants move into Council Houses.

SCHOOLS.

There are thirteen public elementary schools in the district, many of which are old and of unsatisfactory type. The water supplies at Petworth, Loxwood, Fittleworth, Sutton and Plaistow are from the public mains, the remainder obtain their supplies from wells on the premises. At Petworth, trough water closets are provided. In the other Schools, earth pail closets. New Schools are contemplated in the near future at Petworth. The District Medical Officer of Health assists in the Medical Inspections of the Schools as Assistant County Medical Officer.

All cases of infectious disease known to the Head Teacher are notified on a special form to the District Medical Officer of Health, and a duplicate sent to the School Medical Officer.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year:-

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)..... 5

(2)(a) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 0

(3)(a) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurous to health as to be unfit for human habitation 0

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-

Number of dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 5

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

1. Milk Supply:-

Dairies and Cowsheds:-

Number on Register 150

Wholesale:-

(a) Tuberculin Tested 6
(b) Accredited 45
(c) Pasteurised 0
(d) Others 96

Number of Inspections 381

Dairymen (retail):-

Number on Register 52

(a) Tuberculin Tested 3
(b) Accredited 14
(c) Pasteurised 1
(d) Others 42

Number of inspections 378

Number of notices served under Milk and Dairies Order, 1926:-

(a) Satutory 1
(b) Informal 35

Complied with:-

(a) Statutory 1
(b) Informal 33

2. MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Slaughtering has taken place throughout the year at the Government slaughterhouse at Horsham, except for a few pigs slaughtered by farmers or others principally for home consumption If any part of these animals is to be sold for human consumption, inspections are made at the time of slaughter.

Many inspections of various foodstuffs have been inspected at the request of shopkeepers and close co-operation with the Ministry of Food Salvage Officer has been maintained.